

Southwest Climate Change Initiative

WHEREAS, Southwestern states have particular concerns about the impacts of climate change and climate variability on residents, business and the environment, including the potential for prolonged drought, severe forest fires, warmer temperatures, increased snowmelt, reduced snow pack and other effects; and

WHEREAS, there is broad agreement among scientists that increasing emissions of carbon dioxide, methane and other greenhouse gases released to the atmosphere are affecting the Earth's climate; and

WHEREAS, actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions such as energy conservation and development of renewable energy sources may have multiple benefits, including economic development, job creation, cost savings and improved air quality that are not limited to individual state boundaries; and

WHEREAS, Arizona and New Mexico have launched stakeholder-based Climate Change Advisory Groups to address climate change through recommended actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions; and

WHEREAS, regional technical and policy collaboration to address climate change and reduce greenhouse gas emissions can build upon individual state efforts by coordinating and combining available resources, enhancing communication and dialogue, and promoting and advancing clean energy technologies that are economically and environmentally beneficial to the Southwest;


NOW THEREFORE, in conjunction with the efforts of the Climate Change Advisory Groups, the States of Arizona and New Mexico establish the Southwest Climate Change Initiative and agree to collaborate in identifying, evaluating and implementing ways to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and achieve related co-benefits. Such collaboration may include but is not limited to:


- Development of consistent approaches for measuring, forecasting and reporting emissions of greenhouse gases;
- Development of consistent approaches to recognize and give credit for public and private actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- Identification and evaluation of policy options for reducing greenhouse gas emissions within individual states and jointly across state, regional and international borders;
- Establishment of cooperative policies, programs, pilots and/or demonstration projects for greenhouse gas reductions;
- Cooperation with Native American Tribes and communities;

- Identification and promotion of climate change mitigation actions, energy efficient technologies and clean and renewable energy sources that can enhance Southwestern economic growth and development;
- Identification of and advocacy for regional and national climate policies that reflect the needs and interests of Southwestern states;
- Improvement of institutional capacity to address climate mitigation needs by Southwestern states, such as expanded analytical and outreach resources;
- Other appropriate actions to advance the needs and interests of states in reducing greenhouse gas emissions and mitigating climate change and its impacts on the West.

The Southwest Climate Change Initiative is a joint Governor's initiative that will be administered by Arizona Department of Environmental Quality (ADEQ) and the New Mexico Environment Department (NMED) in collaboration with other state agencies and the Governors.

Done this 28 day of February, 2006.


Janet Napolitano
Governor
State of Arizona


Bill Richardson
Governor
State of New Mexico